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ABSTRACT

The origins of social science as a discipline are analyzed in terms of the German scientific community before 1920, which tended to define itself according to the theories of Karl Marx or Immanuel Kant. Following a brief introduction about the nature of social science debates in intellectual Germany, section 2 of the paper considers whether the distinguishing character of social science was its form or its substance and concludes that the discipline began with a far more substantive element than is generally recognized. Sections 3 and 4 outline differences in neo-Kantian and neo-Marxist social science in terms of epistemology, logical status of concepts, cognitive goal, method, type of ethics, role of philosophy, institutional locus, and audience. Section 5 examines the institutionalization of social science by contrasting establishment social science (created before 1855) and the modernist opposition led by Max Weber after 1855. The principal location, academic position, educational policy, type of research, role of theory, relation to socialism, ideology, relation to centers of political power and professional associations of each are categorized. Section 6 analyzes the modernist opposition in relation to contributors of its official publication, "Archiv." The Kant-Marx debate is characterized as located within the modernist opposition. Section 7 focuses on Max Weber and the politics of scientific activity. (KC)

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KANT OR MARX?

PHILOSOPHY AND THE ORIGINS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

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KANT OR MARX?

PHILOSOPHY AND THE ORIGINS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

Social science began as a modernist revolt, but it promises to end as a tame defender of the world it helped create. This paper sketches selected portions of the story of its beginning in hopes that its ending may be better appreciated. The analysis is historical and philosophical, and it is directed toward the sphere of greatest importance: the German scientific community before 1920.

I

Three great debates dominated the intellectual landscape of the youthful human sciences in Germany: the Methodenstreit inaugurated by Schmoller's attack on Menger in 1883; the Werturteilsstreit fueled largely by Max Weber's critique of the "value problem" after 1904; and the dispute over the comparative significance of Kant and Marx for modern social theory, dating in earnest from the 1890s. They were coeval with the neo-Kantian upsurge in philosophy, the reception of Nietzsche's work in academic circles, and the introduction and critique of Marx's system among the socialist and bourgeois intelligentsia. These three debates persisted through the crucial formative years for social science, and, as one would expect, together with the general trends in thought, they exerted enormous influence on the kind of inquiry and knowledge that social science came to represent.

Enough has been said about the disputes over "method" (in the historically specific sense) and "value judgment" to squelch the need for yet another account. One might only point out that both disputes gained notoriety for subsequent social scientists and philosophers of social science precisely because they were thought to have given priority to "methodological" or "epistemological" questions which were then interpreted as "foundational" for all inquiry, theoretical and practical, into politics and society. Ironically, this view reversed the relationship that Max Weber, among others, sought to establish between scientific practice and methodological reflection. The latter was, in Weber's analogy, "no more the precondition of fruitful intellectual work than the knowledge of anatomy is the precondition for 'correct' walking."[1] Writers like Weber, Sombart and Brentano entered the methodological fray against Schmoller, Meyer and Stammler in part to show the limits of "methodological reflection" and the dangers from granting legislative authority to a derivative, second-order discourse. But in accordance with Weber's worst fears, social science has devoted considerable effort to repressing the memory of this critical starting point.

Whereas these quarrels have provoked passionate disagreement for decades, it seems remarkable that the third episode mentioned above, the "Kant or Marx" debate, has received scant attention. Why has this been the case? In comparison with its two companions, the third witness to social science's inception was as closely attuned to political as to philosophical issues. The Kant/Marx alternative was never solely a secondary dispute over "method" or "epistemology," but instead entered the domains of ethics, politics, professional organization and university policy. Furthermore, as an intramural conflict within the younger generation of social scientists and philosophers (including Marxists), it tended to lack the kind of intellectual legitimacy of the other two intergenerational debates. In a way the questions it raised were too dangerous, too ideological, beyond the edge of philosophical certainty: Was Marxism ultimately an ethical system, a moral imperative resting on Kantian idealist principles? On the other hand, was social science ultimately bourgeois ideology, hiding behind the authority of Kant as an anti-Marxist patron saint? As an alternative, were the presuppositions of social science and Marxist theory identical? Or could the "philosophies" of Marx and Kant be synthesized? Or was "social science" a fundamentally "autonomous" form of thought? By raising such uncomfortable questions this particular debate became a far more complex and ragged affair than others, typified by diverse participants, extra-scientific implications, and a tendency to spread beyond the boundaries of academic curricula and accepted disciplinary discourse.

In retrospect these "liabilities" can count as reasons for recasting the quarrel over Kant and Marx as a central episode in the development of social science. It transformed the competing strands of argument in the early twentieth century into a single statement of alternatives, reduced to the symbolic question, Kant or Marx? We can use this question as a window through which to observe social science's emergence; compared with alternative points of view, it promises to offer the most expansive and varied perspective for recovering an understanding of the origins of social science.

II

Let us attempt to track down our prey from two different directions: first, how might we in general characterize this unruly beast, social science? Second, what does it mean to ensnare him in the net cast by either Kant or Marx?

In a recent attempt to order our thinking about the first question, Jeffrey Bergner has suggested that the most distinctive aspect of social science, separating it from previous thought, lies in a special conception of "form." In his view the "founders" of social science, men like Tönnies, Simmel and Weber, did not claim originality or scientific authority on grounds of the "substance" of their thought, but rather by reason of its "formal status." Evidently the form/substance distinction is intended to highlight the essential property of social science, namely "its thoroughgoing concern about the <u>form</u> of proper theorizing and

about the form of evidence which might render the various theories acceptable or unacceptable."[2] It follows, one supposes, that social science cannot be "substantive" in the sense that, say, "Aristotelianism" is--possessing a metaphysical core that when violated leads to the abandonment of the theory altogether. A conceptual nominalism encouraged by neo-Kantian philosophy is seen by Bergner as the root cause of such a regrettable retreat to "formalism."

Now Bergner's characterization of social science, in reality a sharp criticism of its alleged deeply-ingrained historicism (reminiscent of the critiques of both Strauss and Lukacs), can become plausible on only three conditions: by assuming an unambiguous separation between "form" and "substance," such that "form" always performs the controlling function for thought; by presupposing agreement on the legislative intent of methodology for social science, thus reading discussions of "method" as the "formal" foundation on which substantive theories must rest; and by ignoring the self-understanding of social science at its origins in favor of a "reconstructed" history which is ironically unhistorical. Unfortunately for Bergner's thesis, none of these conditions will hold up under close scrutiny. In fact, the argument from a conception of "form" puts us on precisely the wrong ground, for what is most striking about early social science (in contrast to a later Parsonian version) is its astounding wealth of substantive studies and substantive knowledge. Moreover, among practitioners there was considerable agreement on the substantive questions that a science of society ought to raise, more agreement certainly than could be found with respect to matters of "form." (Consider any number of contested positions concerning the "formal" features of theories from Menger's notion of "rationality" to Weber's conception of "value freedom.")

Standing Bergner right side up, a quite different characterization of social science becomes visible. Historically, we can observe a high level of initial agreement about the substantive problems that gave rise to social science: the "problem of labor" (the ubiquitous "Arbeiterfrage" in the language of the time) and the nature of "social policy" or "politics" (Sozialpolitik) under conditions of capitalist development. There can be no doubt, as Fritz Ringer has demonstrated, that social science was conditioned by two historical factors: the economic phase of development between agrarian society and full industrialization, and the political creation of the bureaucratic state, both of which were felt with full force in the last half of the nineteenth century in Germany.[3] This meant, above all, that social science turned its practical and theoretical attention to problems associated with the consequences of industrialization, mobilization and "mass society," or, to put it more abstractly, with the consequences of what Marx discussed as "alienation" and Weber as "rationalization." Indeed, fundamental agreement on this point extended from Marx through Durkheim and Weber.

There are numerous examples of social science's singular thematic orientation. The Verein für Sozialpolitik (Association

for Social Policy), for instance, was established in 1872 expressly as a forum for advancing "practical" research and public discussion on labor, production, class and state policy in the socio-economic sphere. In its first two decades it was quite successful in airing such issues and promoting a certain kind of state-initiated and controlled labor reform.[4] Also, the major social science handbooks of the period, responsible for defining the nature of the field--Conrad's, Schönberg's, or later Weber's Grundriss der Sozialökonomik--reflected exactly the same kind of concern with labor and social policy, usually with the added advantage of a historical and theoretical dimension. But undoubtedly the best example is provided by the Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik, one of the leading social science journals in Germany, founded in 1888 (under the title Archiv für soziale Gesetzgebung und Statistik) by Heinrich Braun, a well-known socialist and husband of an equally famous feminist.

When Jaffé, Sombart and Weber succeeded Braun as coeditors of the Archiv in 1904, they issued a revealing statement defining the journal's purposes and social science's proper terrain. Braun's policy had been to include lengthy statistical reports on the condition of labor and reports on proposed and enacted labor legislation; the new journal abandoned this descriptive reporting in favor of more analytic, critical, historical, scientific and theoretical work (hence the change in the journal's title). Among the disciplines to be included in the "new" social science, the main focus was still on political economy--Nationalökonomie or Volkswirtschaft--but the editors also proposed to incorporate allied fields: Staatslehre, Rechtsphilosophie, Soziologie, Sozialpsychologie, Sozialanthropologie, Sozialethik, Sozialphilosophie (or soziale Theorie), and Erkenntniskritik and Methodenlehre.

This terminology reveals something about the structure of social science disciplines; it turns out to be more complicated than it appears at first. The Archiv editors and contributors generally spoke of the "social sciences" or "cultural sciences" rather than the Geisteswissenschaften, a term more commonly found among some neo-Kantians (e.g., Windelband and Dilthey). Part of the reason for this had to do with the desire to avoid a terminology with psychological or Hegelian connotations, particularly the latter. In Weber's uncompromising words, "There are only two ways: Hegel's or our own approach."[5] As for "political economy," there were actually three possible variants: politische Oekonomie, identified with the classical science of Smith, Ricardo and Malthus (and the term found in Marx's early writings); Nationalökonomie, a concept introduced by Friedrich List and closely associated with a practical commitment to national economic development, even though it came to designate an entire academic field. (Throughout their careers both Weber and Sombart would have readily identified themselves as Nationalökonomen rather than as sociologists.) Finally, Volkswirtschaft was introduced by Bücher as a term for describing the third and most advanced stage in a theory of economic development: from household economy (Oikenwirtschaft), to city economy (Stadtwirtschaft), to Volkswirtschaft. Use of this term often implied a particular theory of progress, one that Weber and others

came to reject. Among the other terms it might be pointed out that Sozialphilosophie simply referred to consideration of social problems from a "philosophical" point of view, using logical and value judgments. Sozialanthropologie was what we would nowadays call sociobiology, that is, the study of questions raised at the boundary between biology and social science. Considerable scepticism about this field (revealed later in debates in the German Sociological Association) prevented it from making much of an inroad on the Archiv. The study of epistemological and methodological questions was added at the end of this list of disciplines and was intended as a way of opening up reflection on the conceptual content of social science, hence "conceptual analysis." But once the gates were opened, the first trickle of interest turned into a flood. Weber's early correspondence as Archiv editor is replete with attempts to keep the journal from being submerged under articles of this kind. Founding of the philosophical journal Logos in 1910 (Weber joined the editorial board) helped ease the situation somewhat.

The crucial question is, did the "social science" disciplines share a substantive orientation? According to the editors, the Archiv had been founded to investigate the "problem of labor" in its widest "cultural significance," and its key concern would continue to be "the radical process of transformation, brought about by capitalism's advance, experienced in our economic life and thus in our cultural existence as a whole."[6] The social science disciplines would view "the general cultural significance of capitalist development as the main scientific problem." Calling the "revolutionizing through capitalism" a "world-historical fact," Jaffe, Sombart and Weber went on to acknowledge a common tendency for the Archiv's efforts that recognized (1) capitalism as a result of historical development that cannot simply be wished away; (2) new social forms and classes, especially the proletariat, which have become "independent elements" in the political life of industrial societies; and (3) the importance of practical activity with "the assistance of scientific knowledge of the historically-given situation." As if to underline the nature of these interests and suggest the widespread agreement about their substantive significance extending from Kathedersozialisten such as Schmoller and Wagner to Marxists like Bebel and Kautsky, the Archiv editors stressed investigation of "causal relationships between economic development and all other social phenomena" as an underlying theme for the journal's "scientific" approach.

If the claim of widespread agreement on the centrality of such themes appears exaggerated, then we need only recall that Weber himself wrote that "the advancement of the economic interpretation of history is one of the most important aims of our journal."[7] Unfortunately this crucial statement has been swept aside too often by those intent on narrowing social science's interest to "the form of proper theorizing," thereby finding little more in someone like Weber than a defense of Verstehen, vague guidelines for construction of "ideal types," and so forth. Of course, Weber made this statement as part of an attack on Marx's epigones who had converted the "materialist conception of history" into dogma.

But here it would seem that Weber's critique is closer to the spirit of Marx, and that it shares in the general view of human action as a product of "external" or "impersonal" forces and conditions, economic and otherwise. We might say that social science articulated certain fundamental assumptions about the conditions of "action" and the historically-given character of such conditions. Marx and Weber--often taken to represent the extremes--are actually quite similar on this score; to cite only one example, Weber's use of class analysis and his critical reconstruction of Marx's concept of class in Economy and Society exemplify the shared perspective, one that is representative of the field as a whole.

III

A case can be made for substantive similarities in early social science. However, there is something altogether too glib about the attempt at a general characterization of social science on any grounds. We often speak as if "social science" were a single entity, a monolithic structure of intentions, assumptions, theories and methods. Of course, nothing is farther from the truth; what we need to do is search for a more differentiated view of social science and its origins. The search for such a view returns us to the second query: What is the meaning of the question, Kant or Marx?

We can simplify the matter considerably by distinguishing among three kinds of answers: one from a neo-Kantian, another from a Marxist, and a third from a political economist. According to Karl Vorländer, sometimes considered a representative of Marburg neo-Kantian views, the basic question was "philosophical" and could be given the following form: Can the materialist conception of history found in Marx be combined with a critique of knowledge and an epistemologically-grounded ethics of the kind expounded by Kant?[8] In this view one confronts a choice between synthesis (Kant and Marx) or negation (Kant or Marx), with far-reaching consequences for the self-understanding of both social science and Marxism, two forms of thought that are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The philosophical question gained urgency, following Vorländer's interpretation, because it had departed from its "properly" philosophical boundaries to assume political importance, as evidenced in Bernstein's work and the ensuing debate within the Social Democratic Party. To solve the philosophical puzzle was therefore also to make a political argument.

For his part Vorländer (and others of his persuasion, such as Cohen and Natorp) sought to refine a Kant-Marx synthesis, but from the Kantian epistemological standpoint. Among other things, this meant that socialism was understood as an ethical system (and not primarily an economic theory) that derived its force from Kant's "ethical idealism," rather than from Marx's materialism. As in writings of the avant-garde nowadays, the materialist critique of society and philosophy was quietly subordinated to principles of justice in Marx, but unlike the present discussion, Kant was then substituted as the superior moral philosopher, whose thought was

grounded in coherent, defensible, rational principles. And just as there could be a neo-Kantian socialism, so there could be a neo-Kantian Geisteswissenschaft or "social science" of mind and culture, one predicated on the conception of philosophy (that is, epistemology) as the ultimate court of appeal in disputes over knowledge-claims. In this respect, of course, Vorländer's neo-Kantian views were identical to those of Windelband and Rickert, neo-Kantians of the Baden school who were in some ways closer to practicing social scientists, such as Weber, Simmel and Schulze-Gävernitz.

There is a second answer: Writing from within the Marxist tradition, Max Adler objected to this formulation by the neo-Kantians, insisting instead that the inner connection between Kant and Marx could be found only in a "critical method" for explaining "the relation of man to his environment."[9] Kant had introduced such a method in fighting to free himself from Leibniz's metaphysics; Marx had completed the struggle through his critique of Hegel, although with the addition of a dialectical and causal theory of history. For Adler, "Marxism is a system of sociological knowledge; it grounds socialism upon causal knowledge of the events of social life. Marxism and sociology are one and the same thing." This view meant that even though Marxism was not a subcategory of the critical philosophy, it stood to complete the intention of that philosophy through a critique of the historical world. In Adler's hopeful words, "If the idealism of Kant and his followers was the philosophy of the conceptual possibility of socialism, the scientific socialism of Marx becomes the theory of the actual reality of idealism." Hence, according to one of Adler's pithiest formulae, "social science, by its character, is revolutionary." The movement from Kant to Marx is then a movement from philosophy to social science, from critical method to revolutionary practice. Science leads to politics, politics to science, in a progressive spiral of transformations. But this view also implies a separation between philosophy and science, not in order to deny philosophical content in Marx's work, but in order to emphasize its ultimate positive worth as a causal and explanatory science. If socialism is the wave of the future, for Adler this is not because of its ethical justification, but because of its causal necessity.

Adler's was a "no-nonsense" approach to Marx, parallel in many ways to the current writing of William Shaw. Marx's scientific claims were taken at face value, not as metaphor, and his "historical laws" were interpreted as central to his deterministic system, to political practice, and by extension to social science as a whole. What appears noteworthy in all of this is Adler's apparent acceptance of Mach's "positivism" as a guide to understanding Marx, and his acceptance of the neo-Kantian proposition that philosophy must be the final arbiter in clarifying the logic of "cause" and "explanation" and in clarifying the logic of historical "development." Furthermore, Adler's overall view of Marx was quite representative of early social science as a whole, and it was a view that did not shift in any major way until Lukacs' first essays on the subject (1919-20). On account of the "deterministic" emphasis,

it was somewhat easier to think of supplementing Marx with Kant, or to think of Marx as offering a self-contained system of social science that was at the same time a guide to political action.

A third answer to our question comes from liberal political economy. Gerhart von Schulze-Gävernitz, Max Weber's friend and Freiburg colleague, agreed that the fundamental problems here were philosophical, but proposed to address them by reversing Adler's claims. Kantian dualism was the fundamental presupposition of social science for Schulze-Gävernitz: the realm of "nature" was to be distinguished from the realm of "value," appearance from idea, being from judgment. These parallel distinctions were not a matter of "proof" for Schulze-Gävernitz, but of "decision" (Entschluss)--a choice or resolve to see the world and to act in it in a certain way, not an ontological claim about the nature of the world. From this perspective, interestingly enough, Marx came to resemble Leibniz, to represent a throwback to uncritical, pre-Kantian "monism." (In recent years others have put forward the same view, only without Schulze-Gävernitz's negative critique.) For the monist, nature was thought in itself to contain value, being to encompass judgment; that which had no being, which was not naturally present as an essence, had no value whatsoever. The negation of "value" (in the Kantian sense, as a cultural artifact) led to "value nihilism," as Schulze-Gävernitz called it, which was then combined with a kind of naive Enlightenment "sensualism" that postulated human knowledge as a "mirror" of the external material world. Some sort of "causal necessity" could be established on these grounds, to be sure, but in Schulze-Gävernitz's view only at the expense of Kant's "knowing subject" and therefore at the sacrifice of an epistemological foundation for science. Kantian dualism could give voice to the subject, to his projects, vocations, meanings, interpretations, political practices. This was the crucial turn, for Marx's materialism became simply a familiar form of naturalism, now superseded by Kant's understanding of how the subject's construction of a knowable world is possible.[10]

The issue between Kant and Marx was for Schulze-Gävernitz, as for Vorländer and Adler, still one of epistemological foundations: dualism or monism, conceptual nominalism or realism, critical philosophy or naturalism. But Schulze-Gävernitz embraced the Kantian side of these alternatives because of his conviction that only they offered a secure route to a rational and intellectually defensible epistemology. It is revealing, however, that it was not only Schulze-Gävernitz's version of Marx, but especially his own neo-Kantian alternative that enshrined the idea of the mind as a "mirror of nature," together with the idea of "knowledge as an assemblage of accurate representations."[11] Philosophy came to function as a "tribunal of pure reason" for judging the performance and limits of science, which, of course, made the claims of a neo-Kantian social science dependent on the prior accomplishments of philosophy--that is, philosophy understood as the "theory" of knowledge.

Schulze-Gävernitz was not entirely aware of these implications

but he certainly was aware of philosophy's search for a legitimate place and identity in the emerging world of scholarship. An important function of the entire Kant/Marx debate was to assign philosophy a scientifically respectable task within the new academic division of labor. It became guardian of the most fundamental questions concerning "knowledge" as such. The movement "back to Kant" signaled a return to the task of clarification assigned philosophy by Kant, and it suggested an attractive solution for the crisis in philosophy--a solution that reinstated philosophy's unique power.

IV

The great advantage of the "Kant or Marx?" debate is not only the way in which it probes the foundations of social science, but also the way it sets forth an alignment between the philosophy and the sociology of rival views. Given the terms of the debate, one might propose the following simplified reinterpretation:

	neo-Kantian social science	neo-Marxist social science
epistemology	dualism	monism
logical status of concepts	nominalism	realism
cognitive goal	knowledge of society	transformation of society
method	critique	dialectic
type of ethics	formal rationality: prescriptive rules	substantive rationality: absolute justice
role of philosophy	epistemology is foundational for social science	philosophy of history is foundational for social science and revolutionary praxis
institutional locus	university academic disciplines	political movement and academic disciplines
audience	professional community of science	intellectuals

Whether social science actually follows (or continues to follow) one of the other of these patterns is another matter: for Adler and for Schulze-Gävernitz it seems that it does, and there is an initial plausibility to their view. Why not classify all of social science as basically either Kantian or Marxist? Adler and Schulze-Gävernitz tend to view the neo-Kantian and neo-Marxist alternatives as opposing "paradigms" requiring a decisive either/or commitment by the scientific investigator. As in the case of all

argumentation that invokes the notion of a paradigm, to adopt one version of social science is to reject the other. The decision for adoption is determined, it would appear, not by comparison of the two paradigms with each other and with "nature," but by a philosophical argument that subordinates one to the other: that is, Adler defends the synchronic and diachronic superiority of "Marxism as social science," Schulze-Gävernitz the same kind of superiority for his neo-Kantian candidate. Opposition is reinterpreted as ideologically inspired. Each argument is the obverse of the other, and each is stated in uncompromising terms.

Vorländer, however, stands on different ground. For him the problem is to clarify the outlines of a synthesis, a "third world" of scientific practice. In this view there is the hint of an alternative which we might reformulate as the idea of an "autonomous" social science. Autonomy implies a single vocation of science that supersedes other orders of action and belief, including those identified closely with Kant and Marx. "Neither Kant nor Marx, perhaps...Nietzsche" can be proposed as the epigram for this view. It stands as an important proposal because it can be perceived as a way out of the impasse created by oppositions. But in reality its success also depends upon enforcement of a distinction between genuine science and mere ideology.

When stated in these terms, one suspects the dispute among alternatives cannot be terminated, at least not at the level of "philosophy." The question is, can a resolution be found and enforced at the level of the "politics of science?"

V

Let us leave philosophy behind, turn to politics, and ask how social science (or one of its versions) came to be "institutionalized." I propose briefly to explore three episodes: the effect of German university policy and structure on academic social science; the formation of what I shall call the "modernist opposition" within social science; and the birth of the DGS (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie, or German Sociological Association), and Max Weber's stormy role as midwife for it.

Like all academic fields, social science was deeply affected by the structure of the German universities.[12] This meant, above all, the domination of the University of Berlin and the Education Division of the Prussian Ministry of Culture, headed by Friedrich Althoff from 1882 to 1907, and acquiescence in a number of educational practices and regulations (such as the "Lex Arons") designed to curb dissenters and win support for the political status quo. But the social science disciplines shouldered two special burdens: they were typically new fields, fighting for influence and prestige among established sciences, and their subject matter was often politically sensitive and therefore by its very nature of concern to the state. These two factors created an important (and unfortunate) dynamic in the social sciences, in which disciplines sought to demonstrate their "usefulness" (or shall we say "relevance?"), and the state, taking advantage of such impulses, sought to coopt social

science for its own political purposes. In general, the social science sanctioned by Althoff did a poor job of resisting any such enticements.

The Verein für Sozialpolitik, formed under Schmoller's guidance, is a fine case in point, especially as one follows its history in the crucial decades of retrenchment in social policy from about 1895 to 1914. From the beginning the Verein's research efforts tended to be selected from the standpoint of the needs of state policy, and the purpose of such research was often advancement of what we might call "social welfare legislation," typically designed as a "revolution from above" to buy off the working class. (This was one dimension to Bismarckian domestic policy after 1878.) Membership in the Verein was drawn from the universities, industry, government, unions, and the bureaucracy. Thus, not only did the association serve as a conduit for social science into the corridors of power, public and private, but the reverse was true as well: powerful individuals and groups outside the university had some measure of control over social science. This latter incipient tendency became more and more pronounced through the 1890s, and finally burst forth in a ferocious exchange at the 1905 meetings of the Verein, provoked largely by the "younger generation" of "radicals," led by Weber and Naumann. These disagreements, which threatened to destroy the association, provoked a continuing debate over bureaucracy, political reform, and value judgments, lasting up to the eve of World War I.

The history of the Verein, its debates, and its split into two factions is a complicated affair, however. I mention it here as a convenient avenue into an understanding of university-based social science during the crucial "Althoff era." For what we find in the Verein is a small-scale replication of the balance of forces in academic social science, a division of the entire field into two groupings: the Schmoller-Althoff establishment, representing scientific (and political) orthodoxy; and the much more loosely organized "opposition," representing various "radical," unorthodox or non-conformist points of view in social science. Members of the second, younger group had often studied with major figures from establishment social science and had been promoted by them. (Sombart and Weber are representative in this regard.) Thus, the ensuing confrontations often appeared as a bitter patricidal struggle. This is to say that social science as we know it emerged from a "modernist revolt," but a "modernism" of a particular kind. We can suggest that it arose as an oppositional movement, culturally and institutionally, in reaction against "Prussianization" of society and the university system, and in an effort to achieve an opening to the left, even a critical engagement and expropriation of the "materialist conception of history" and the economic interpretation of social action.[13]

The distinction suggested here with respect to organization of social science in the universities can be clarified in a summary tabulation. Of course, brevity risks exaggeration, but in this case the sharp contrasts give an accurate picture of the actual tendencies:

	Establishment Social Science	Modernist Opposition
age	Schmoller's generation; born before 1855	Weber's generation; born after 1855
principal location	University of Berlin	non-Prussian universities
academic position	Ordinarien (full profs. & state civil servants)	Privatdozenten, Extraordinarien (irregular, unsalaried positions)
educational policy	support Althoff system; oppose university reform & technische Hochschulen	oppose Althoff system; support university reform & technische Hochschulen
type of research	state-supported & defined research	"independent" research
role of "theory" & "philosophy"	indifferent or hostile to theory & philosophy	theoretically inclined & sophisticated; question philosophical foundations of social science (e.g., the Kant/Marx debate)
relation to socialism	committed to state socialism at most	committed to or interested in socialist movement
ideology	conservative: opposed or indifferent to electoral reform; oppose Constitutional reform and feminism	radical: support electoral reform, Constitutional reform, and feminist movement
relation to centers of political power	insiders: support alliance of bureaucracy, feudal orders, student fraternities, and capitalist interests	outsiders: oppose this alliance of social forces
main publication	Schmollers Jahrbuch (1877)	Archiv (1st series, 1888; 2nd series, 1904)
professional association	Verein für Sozialpolitik (1872)	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie (1910)

What needs to be stressed from this tabulation is the relationship between "structural" characteristics of the educational system and the substance of social science. From his post in the Prussian Kultusministerium Althoff ran a tight ship, to say the least, promoting Schmoller and his circle; protecting those who were loyal and agreeable to conducting the "right" kind of state-supported research; rewarding followers with salaried full professorships,

research institutes and publication opportunities. Such cozy arrangements encouraged a complacent social science, hiding its indifference behind an ideology of "academic freedom" and a militantly a-theoretical descriptive scholarship. As an example, the Kant/Marx debate engaged mainly the energies of the modernist opposition. It is no wonder that Max Weber castigated the "Althoff system" for its "corrupting influence on the new academic generation," and Althoff himself (who Weber knew personally) for "his open and unqualified contempt for other human beings." Under the conditions prevailing in the universities, Weber concluded, "we ought not to speak of the existence of 'the freedom of science and teaching' in Germany, as has always been done. The fact is that the alleged academic freedom is obviously bound up with the espousal of certain views which are politically acceptable in court circles and in salons, and furthermore with the manifestation of a certain minimum of conformity with ecclesiastical opinion or, at least, a facsimile thereof. The 'freedom of science' exists in Germany within the limits of political and ecclesiastical acceptability. Outside these limits, there is none."[14] What appears surprising is not the sharpness of these judgments, but rather the denials they provoked from academia and the bureaucracy.

Given Prussia's size, influence and prestige, Althoff's style and policies extended well beyond the boundaries of the Prussian university system, affecting the major and minor non-Prussian universities.[15] Only at German-speaking institutions outside Germany--Vienna, Prague, Zürich, Basel--might one expect to escape Prussia's grip. This meant, of course, that within Germany those possessing political or religious liabilities--especially Socialists and Jews, thought many others qualified too--found it impossible to rise above the level of an unsalaried Extraordinarius or Privatdozent, or to affiliate with a philosophical faculty at a major university. These individuals swelled the ranks of the modernist opposition in social science. Numerous cases can be cited: Sombart failed to receive the appointment to replace Weber at Freiburg, despite Weber's support (Weber had placed him first on the list of candidates); Simmel failed to be appointed at Heidelberg, again despite Weber's intensive efforts, and remained a Privatdozent his entire career. But perhaps the perfect test case was Robert Michels, because of his positive qualifications: astounding productivity as a young scholar; an impeccable Catholic patrician family background; even marriage to Gisela Lindner, daughter of his respected major professor at Halle! But in 1906 he was denied an appointment at Marburg (and elsewhere) because of (a) his socialism, said to be unusually "vocal;" (b) refusal to have his children baptised; and (c) failure to keep his rented house sufficiently tidy. It is to the credit of Heidelberg colleagues that they were scandalized by these reasons; but they were nevertheless powerless to reverse the decision. The case (and the outcome) is typical. Michels ended up at the University of Turin, a victim of the Althoff system; he got no closer to German academia than a position as Ordinarius at Basel.

VI

The modernist opposition was not a homogeneous group, but was instead composed of what one might call different "circles" of informality and loosely connected affiliates. "Circle" rather than "cluster," Clark's term for identifying organizational patterns in French universities, seems most appropriate for characterizing these aggregates, for they were rather poorly defined, lacked a well-developed authority structure, varied in size from a few to dozens of members, and could act in only limited ways as effective centers of influence.[16] Unlike French clusters, these circles typically did not include professors at the center of the academic world, namely, the philosophical faculty of the University of Berlin. For instance, when Herkner moved from Zürich to Berlin in 1907, the only member of the "opposition" to perform this miracle, he compromised his full-fledged membership in the Weber-Sombart circle and was used at best as a go-between and arbiter of conflict within the Verein in general and between Schmoller and Weber in particular. When Sombart finally made his way to Berlin in 1906, where he had studied decades earlier under Schmoller and Wagner, it was as a member of the business college, quite obviously a status lacking the usual perquisites.

This is one of the most striking features of German social science: **Althoff** (a government official, after all), Schmoller, and a few others in the orthodox camp could count as "patrons" in the manner of the French model. But the social science opposition simply lacked any equivalent figures. In contrast to other parts of science and to the political culture as a whole, the modernist segment of the scientific community was far more anarchic. Its leaders were marginal figures, outsiders and renegades; they came out of the "prophetic" tradition. Circles were formed less around or by such figures, as in France with its traditions of Bonapartism, extending into science, as they were around friendships, congruent scientific interests or similar political orientations. One criterion of definition might override or conflict with another. Membership was generally not exclusive: circles could easily overlap, and memberships could fluctuate.

These patterns are seen very clearly among the many scholars who published in the Archiv. Braun had founded the journal as a radical alternative to Schmollers Jahrbuch, and he had deliberately pursued a policy using it as a meeting-ground for critical scholarship, both socialist and liberal. Sombart, Jaffé and Weber developed this policy in a number of ways: They encouraged publications by a large number of syndicalists and renegade Marxists, often using contacts cultivated by Michels and Bernstein. They also published work on the quarrels over Marxism among socialists, a good deal of it "revisionist" or critical in nature. And they encouraged publications from early feminists, most of them "liberals" of one sort or another. Finally, of course, there was the work of the large Weber-Sombart circle itself, consisting of a wide variety of social scientists in different disciplines. A preliminary survey of these circles from 1904 to 1920 shows the following alignments:

1 Socialists	2 Michels Circle	3 Feminist Circle
Bernstein	Michels	Henriette Fürth
David Koigen	Gisela Michels-Lindner	Elsbeth Cohn
Tugan-Baranowsky	Luigi Fabbri	Camilla Jellinek
Conrad Schmidt	Achille Loria	Käthe Lux
Edward Pease	Enrico Leone	Gisela Michels-Lindner
Sombart	Arturo Labriola	Alice Salomon
Tönnies	Michele Berardelli	Marie Bernays
Carl Grünberg	Hubert Lagardelle	Maria von Stach
Max Adler	Paul Louis	Rosa Kempf
Radbruch	Nieuwenhuis	Marie Luise Gothein
Hugo Preuss	Cornelissen	Charlotte Lenbuscher
Ernst Bloch		
Legien	after 1914	
Landauer		
Liebknecht		
Lukacs		

4

Weber-Sombart Circle

Weber	Emil Lask	Arthur Salz
Sombart	Vogelstein	Schulze-Gävernitz
Jaffé	Herkner	Alfred Weber
Tönnies	Vorländer	Robert Liefmann
Radbruch	Simmel	Willy Hellpach
Michels	C.J. Fuchs	Hermann Oncken
Gisela Michels-Lindner	Friedrich Gottl	Ernst Bloch
Camilla Jellinek	Wilhelm Lexis	Georg Lukacs
Marie Bernays	Eulenburg	Schumpeter
Marie Luise Gothein	Emil Lederer	Philippovich
Eberhard Gothein	Walter Lotz	Palyi
Alice Salomon	Troeltsch	
Brentano	Hermann Levy	

This is by no means an exhaustive analysis of the Archiv participants. (For example, there was also a small Austrian contingent: Spann, von Mises, Neurath, Schumpeter, Kelsen.) But it can serve as a relatively satisfactory indication of the kinds of groupings that existed in the modernist wing of social science. One should note the application of the criteria suggested in the previous section: for instance, as of 1905 the only Ordinarien in the first three circles were Grünberg at Vienna and Labriola at Turin. There were none in Germany's universities. In the Weber-Sombart circle only Simmel was at Berlin (as a lowly Privatdozent), and only Sombart was at one of the old-line Prussian universities (Breslau). Beyond that in the Prussian system Tönnies was at Kiel (appointed Ordinarius there in 1908, after a struggle with Althoff and a long wait), Lexis at Göttingen, and Michels at Marburg (departing soon for Turin).[17] The bulk of the other members were located at Heidelberg, Munich, Leipzig and Freiburg, often in insecure, temporary and unsalaried positions.

Across these groups there was a remarkably high level of interest in "social philosophy" and "social ethics." According to Sombart, this can be explained in part by the serious reception of Marx in academic circles that began in 1894 with the publication of Capital III.[18] Sombart himself reviewed the third volume for Braun's Archiv, earning Engels' praise as a "somewhat eclectic Marxist." This publishing event helped break Marxism out of the internecine partisan strife between Lassallean and Marxist followers and out of the tedious academic rehearsals of the SPD party programs in the early 1890s. (In fact, establishment scholarship never moved beyond these familiar early perspectives.)[19] The Marx-reception also meant that a new critical language started to be absorbed into the middle-class reform movement and into the writings of political economists. But this was only part of the reason for philosophy's revival: Nietzsche must also share some of the credit, having already become a cultural phenomenon by 1895. Even Tönnies, a perfectly respectable sociologist, felt compelled to register his confession to having fallen under Nietzsche's spell.[20] Finally, one must not forget the professional philosophers themselves, who now began to attract attention with reflections on problems posed by the newer disciplines.[21]

The debate over Kant and Marx qualifies as part of the renewed interest in social philosophy. It was a debate located within the modernist opposition in a way that was not true of the Methodenstreit or Werturteilsstreit. It could be called a civil argument for the heart and mind of the new social science. In this environment to raise the question, "Kant or Marx?" was to ask about the identity of the modernist opposition and to stake out a claim for leadership in social science. Despite their disagreements, the modernists' strength lay in their capacity for raising philosophical questions in the first place. Establishment social science, by contrast, remained unsupported by self-conscious theoretical ideas: consequently, when its members died off, it disappeared as a distinctive orientation.

VII

The formation of the DGS offers a brilliant case study in the politics of social science and particularly the modernist opposition. From the start the effort to found this association was dogged by organizational, intellectual and personal difficulties. As Weber, one of the principal organizers, complained before the inaugural session: "If it succeeds in spite of everything, then I shall believe in the inscrutible ways of the Lord on behalf of this confounded science, sociology."[22] Fortunately, enough of Weber's correspondence and Michels' ruminations have survived to give us an unusually candid glimpse into this frustrating episode.

Convening the DGS was itself a political statement of sorts. It was seen by some as a way of creating a stable meeting ground for scientific debate by those with opposed political views. In particular an attempt was made to recruit socialists for an inquiry into the press, but only a small number enlisted: Bernstein, David, Calwer, Braun and Quarck. Also, recalling Adler's views,

sociology was a suspect science, seen by many (as Michels explained) as "nothing more than a euphemism for socialism and... the specter of red revolution and the terror."[23] In this situation the Association's original aim of confining its activities to "pure science" was backed by both scientific and tactical arguments: that is, as a free forum for the pursuit of knowledge, it was thought that the DGS would serve the interests of science against the centers of bureaucratic domination. Furthermore, since all radical elements were excluded from establishment science, the appropriate tactical means for recovering some measure of academic and political freedom was "not to attempt to replace official or regressive science with the counterweight of socialist or progressive science, but to destroy all of the relations that can bind the sciences to the constituted powers, of whatever kind."[24] The Association's practical attempt to assert social science's autonomy by excluding moral exhortations was intended, at least in principle, as the most effective means for a radical assault on the interlocking directorate of established science in the universities and political control in the Imperial and Prussian ministries. Rather than a frontal attack, which would be easily brushed aside, an indirect maneuver was believed to stand the best chance of long-term success.

This was, in fact, the rationale behind Weber's controversial postulation of the heterogeneity of value-spheres. The DGS became the experimental test-site for the application of Weber's abstract postulate. By any normal standards of evaluation, Weber's experiment would have to be counted a failure, and his rationale, if not a failure, at least a subject of endless, acrimonious and unproductive value-disputes. Much of the discussion at Frankfurt in 1910 was "scandalous," Weber himself reported, consisting of "foolish debates over the regulations concerning value-judgments, pedantic interruptions by Tönnies [as chairman], ensuing protests, and so forth."[25] Michels noted with wry understatement that the resultant "véritable chasse aux Werturteile" gave the Frankfurt meetings "the appearance of a Latin assembly rather than a meeting of German professors."[26]

It was in this atmosphere that Weber decided he had wasted enough time tilting at windmills. As he informed Michels after the second meeting, "I resigned from the executive committee of the 'sociologists.' In a struggle in permanence my nerves aren't a match for such pesky insects as Herr Goldscheid--for his 'services' in good faith and his 'idealism' too. Now I am only trying still to organize the scientific activity as best I can. May these gentlemen, none of whom can stifle the impulse (for that's what it is!) to importune the public with his subjective 'valuations,' all infinitely uninteresting to me, and everyone of whom must otherwise still turn his lectures into hard cash (this does not occur in the Verein für Sozialpolitik!) kindly stay in their own circle. I am absolutely fed up with appearing time and again as a Don Quixote of an allegedly 'unfeasible' principle and of provoking 'embarrassing scenes.'"[27] Weber's statement reveals one source of modernism's appeal: the new radical science had indeed

attracted underprivileged strata from the intelligentsia--Privatdozenten and otherwise unsalaried scholars. But in the academic struggle for existence, which was particularly harsh at this level, survival placed a high premium on personal display and opinion. The politics of sociology would show that the existing organization of science in the universities worked against the new methodological principle on which Weber wanted to reconstruct that science. The immediate solution, as Weber saw it, was dispersal of authority to include the "privileged" full professors; when that failed to occur, he withdrew from the DGS, but continued the debate in the Verein für Sozialpolitik. As it turned out, there too in the bastion of orthodoxy the contradiction between the politics of science and methodology of science could have no practical resolution.

Weber's revealing comparison of himself with Quixote's epic quests, the hint of am embarrassed slide from the sublime into the ridiculous before a professional audience, recalled the self-identification he had established in this mature phase of his scientific productivity. Once when conveying his unsuitability as a replacement for Schmoller as chairman of the Verein, Weber amplified his intentions and their dangers: "I intend to devote myself more and more exclusively to scientific criticism. In doing so I must attack people like Stammler, Ostwald, Lamprecht, Windelband, even Simmel with the utmost objective relentlessness of a kind that can produce discord now and then, even if I choose the most polite form conceivable...However, in every case I am branded as a (methodological, scientific) partisan, which I also want to be."[28] But if Weber, the most visible modernist prophet, deliberately courted controversy, then he also threatened to transgress the fine line separating propriety from notoriety, admiration from incredulity, even (ironically) politics from science. The question was, would Weber-Quixote's singular search be greeted as the effort of genuine foresight or of perverse imagination? Of course, Weber's DGS colleagues gave both answers. But by appropriating a military-political language of attack, discord and partisanship the modernist suggested, for better or worse, that scientific activity was an extension of politics by other means. So long as the objects of attack could be seen by all as worthy foes rather than unwitting impostors, it made little difference to science. But when perspective fragmented, then modernism was left open to the very charge of partisanship that it had attempted to circumvent.

VIII

This paper began with a question; why not end with one too. Weber's search for meaning and symbolism puts our inquiry in its most beguiling end-form: was the formation of social science in the image of the modernist opposition a creation of the tragic, satiric or epic imagination?

NOTES

1. "Critical Studies in the Logic of the Cultural Sciences," The Methodology of the Social Sciences. ed. Shils and Finch (New York, 1949), p. 115; Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre (Tübingen, 3rd ed., 1968), p. 217; see the discussion in John G. Gunnell, "Encounters of a Third Kind: The Alienation of Theory in American Political Science," American Journal of Political Science 25 (1981), 444-447.

2. Bergner, The Origin of Formalism in Social Science (Chicago, 1981), p. 3, and the "Introduction" generally for this argument.

3. The Decline of the German Mandarins (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 1-13.

4. This point may be worth emphasizing, since in his 1969 APSA presidential address David Easton proposed that political scientists initiate formation of an association like the Verein. The proposal has been ignored, a fact that should not be greeted by dismay by those familiar with the German association's history. But what we have instead are installations like the American Enterprise Institute, Brookings, the Rand Corporation, and the like. The best studies of the Verein are D. Lindenlaub, Richtungskämpfe im Verein für Sozialpolitik (Wiesbaden, 1967), and Marie-Louise Plessen, Die Wirksamkeit des Vereins für Socialpolitik von 1872-1890 (Berlin, 1975).

5. Quoted in Wolfgang Schluchter, The Rise of Western Rationalism, Max Weber's Developmental History (Berkeley, 1981), p. 21.

6. "Geleitwort," Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik 19 (1904), i-vii; all quotations in this paragraph are from this source. This succinct statement preceded Weber's "Objectivity" essay and should be read in conjunction with it as a precise summation of the Archiv's mission. The style of the "Geleitwort" suggests it was written by Weber; it has not been translated.

7. "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy," The Methodology of the Social Sciences, p. 68; Wissenschaftslehre, p. 167. It is especially worth citing this passage, since Bergner has touted his study as an extended commentary on Weber's "Objectivity" essay, a study that "aims to restore the general tendency of Weber's work to its central place in his thought" (p. 10).

8. Vorländer's relevant studies include Kant und der Sozialismus (Berlin, 1900); Die neukantische Bewegung im Sozialismus (Berlin, 1902); Marx und Kant (Vienna, 1904); "Marx oder Kant? Ein Beitrag zur neuesten Diskussion über dieses Thema," Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik 28 (1909), 693-705; and Kant und Marx, Ein Beitrag zur Philosophie des Sozialismus (Tübingen, 1911).

9. "The Relation of Marxism to Classical German Philosophy," in Austro-Marxism, ed. Bottomore and Goode (Oxford, 1978), p. 65,

a translation for Adler's collected essays, Kant und der Marxismus (Berlin, 1925); all quotations are from this same source. For additional sources see Immanuel Kant zum Gedächtnis (Vienna, 1904); Kausalität und Teleologie im Streite um die Wissenschaft (Vienna, 1904); and Das Soziologische in Kants Erkenntniskritik, Ein Beitrag zur Auseinandersetzung zwischen Naturalismus und Kritizismus (Vienna, 1924).

10. For these views see Marx oder Kant? (Freiburg, 1909), and "Nochmals 'Marx oder Kant?'" Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik 30 (1910), 514-531, 825-847.

11. The quoted phrases are from Richard Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (Princeton, 1979), pp. 163, 139.

12. The best historical study of German universities is Charles E. McClelland, State, Society, and University in Germany 1700-1914 (Cambridge, 1980), esp. chs. 5-8 for the nineteenth century.

13. One should stress that it is primarily members of the more innovative second group who continue to be read and discussed, and who figure prominently in our consciousness of early social science: Weber, Simmel, Tönnies, Sombart, Michels; perhaps also Troeltsch, Meinecke and Bernstein. Members of the social science establishment--Schmoller, Wagner, Delbrück, Francke, Oldenberg, Gierke--more esteemed and rewarded in their own day, are barely remembered at all. That the situation has been reversed, even for modernists outside Germany, can be seen in a small way by correspondence in the Nachlass von Schmoller from people like Thorstein Veblen (who in 1899 sent Schmoller some of his early essays in the American Journal of Sociology) and Sidney Webb (who invited Schmoller to stay with him in London during professional meetings in 1906). One should also emphasize the depth of the antagonism between these two groups: for example, in 1903 Otto von Gierke, then Rector of the University of Berlin, prohibited the "Freie wissenschaftliche Vereinigung" from inviting Eduard Bernstein to deliver a lecture on "Proudhon and Lassalle." The episode was typical.

14. Remarks translated in Max Weber on Universities, ed. Shils (Chicago, 1974), pp. 17, 41, 43.

15. In 1871 there were three main categories of universities in Germany: (1) the Prussian universities, composed of the original core of six (Berlin, Halle, Königsberg, Breslau, Bonn, Greifswald) plus three added in 1870-71 (Kiel, Marburg, Göttingen); (2) major non-Prussian universities (Heidelberg, Leipzig, Munich); and (3) minor non-Prussian universities (Freiburg, Tübingen, Erlangen, Giessen, Jena, Rostock). Strasbourg, annexed after the Franco-Prussian war, was added as a "Reich" university in 1872, but was in fact largely controlled by Althoff. Thus, Prussia commanded ten of the nineteen university systems.

16. See Terry N. Clark, Prophets and Patrons: The French University and the Emergence of the Social Sciences (Cambridge, 1973.)

17. Details of the difficulties encountered by Tönnies, Michels and Sombart can be found in Arthur Mitzman, Sociology and Estrangement (New York, 1970); also L. Scaff, "Max Weber and Robert Michels," American Journal of Sociology 86 (1981), 1269-86.

18. Das Lebenswerk von Karl Marx (Jena, 1909), pp. 7-9.

19. Representative examples are Karl Oldenberg, Die Ziele der deutschen Sozialdemokratie (Leipzig, 1891), and Adolf Wagner, Das neue Sozialdemokratische Programm (Berlin, 1892).

20. In his brief study, Der Nietzsche-Kultus, Eine Kritik (Leipzig, 1897).

21. A fine case in point is Windelband's Rektoratsrede at Strassburg in 1894: "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft."

22. This comes from a letter to Franz Eulenburg, 11 October 1910, in the Nachlass Weber.

23. Robert Michels, "La société allemande de sociologie et son premier congrès," Revue Internationale de Sociologie 18 (1910), 810.

24. Ibid., 812.

25. From another letter to Eulenburg, 22 October 1910, in the Nachlass Weber

26. "La société allemande de sociologie," 813.

27. Letter of 9 November 1912, in the Archivo Max Weber; parts of the letter are also transcribed by Marianne Weber in Max Weber, A Biography, tr. Zohn (New York, 1975), pp. 424-425, but typically with errors, omissions, and lack of citation.

28. Letter to Heinrich Herkner, 11 May 1909, in the Nachlass Weber.